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SPORTS

Winchester wrestling enjoys Top 10 finish at state divisional meet; senior captains move on to All-States

JOE MCCONNELL | SPORTS EDITOR

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Winchester High wrestlers Casey Trumbower, Kai Napadow Baquero, Beni Curcio, Eddie Donlon and Leo Gannon pose with assistant coach Anthony Fraumeni, second, right, during last weekend's state divisional meet at North Andover High School. COURTESY PHOTO/DIANA BAQUERO

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After the Winchester High qualified wrestlers competed hard over two days last weekend (Feb. 20, 21) in the State Division 1 Meet at North Andover High School, Mother Nature gave them a break to rest and recuperate with Monday's blizzard that resulted in two days off from school.

There was much to be proud of at the divisional meet, starting with a Top 10 finish – ninth overall – out of 50 statewide teams. It was the program's highest finish in many years.

For the record, the Top 10 Division 1 schools were Central Catholic (224 points), Shawsheen (174), St. John's Prep (120), Leominster (79), Bristol-Plymouth (76.5), New Bedford (71.5), Methuen (65.5), Andover (61.5), Winchester (59.5), Wellesley (55.5) and Franklin (55.5).

"Division 1 is objectively the toughest division throughout the entire state," said Assistant Coach Vitaly Napadow. "We had seven wrestlers competing, and most of the boys contributed to our point total, while underclassmen Rani Audi (106-pounds) and Leo Gannon (132) got a taste of competing on the big stage."

Winchester's Ele Siciliano competed in the girls state divisional tournament at 114-pounds.

"Win or lose, getting that feel for the state tournament is an important (first) step to coming back next year and winning those back-to-back close matches," said Napadow.

Senior Luca Kovacev, however, had his season and career come to an end after going 1-2 last weekend.

"Luca made huge strides this year, and competed hard in this tou
said Napadow.

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Kovacev compiled a 35-18 record over the last two years, and throughout his four-year high school career he amassed 66 wins.

Senior captains Kai Napadow Baquero (120-pounds, third place) and Eddie Donlon (138-pounds, third) were the team leaders last weekend in North Andover. Senior captain Ilyas Malik (175) finished fifth.

Shaun Garrett placed eighth overall last weekend at 215, and ended up 24-15 on the year.

“(Garrett) has been a solid competitor, and was a perfect example of how upper weight classes can be filled in nicely by tough football kids looking for a winter sport. Hopefully, that message gets out to the underclassmen,” said Napadow.

The entire Winchester wrestling program, along with the parents, showed up to cheer on the qualifying wrestlers to that Top 10 finish.

“It meant a lot to the wrestlers to see that support,” said Napadow.

The Top 5 wrestlers in each weight class at the divisional meet is now moving on to the All-State Meet at the Mass Mutual Center in Springfield on March 1 and 2, and as a result all three aforementioned Winchester captains are heading to Springfield to represent head coach Ryan Errico’s program.

“Kai, Eddie and Ilyas will be competing over two days, and they’ll have to place in the Top 6 to qualify for the All-New England Meet the following weekend,” said Napadow. “But I know that these boys will be bat the end.”

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Joe McConnell is a longtime, award-winning sports editor for numerous North Shore publications. He began covering Winchester sports for the News in November 2024 and is currently its Sports Editor. He can be reached at editor@winchesternews.org.

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SPORTS

Winchester boys basketball heads to Bridgewater-Raynham for Sweet 16 game after beating Lexington in postseason opener

It was the third meeting this year between Middlesex League boys basketball rivals Lexington (16-5, 11th seed) and Winchester (17-4, 22nd seed). They split the first two during the regular season, thus making this Round of 32 postseason matchup the

SPORTS

Winchester boys hockey advances to the Sweet 16 after beating Wachusett in the tournament opener

The Winchester High boys hockey team (12-9-2), the 17th seed, edged the 16th-seeded Wachusett Regional Mountaineers (18-2-1), 5-4 in a Round of 32 Division tournament game at Westb Northstar Ice Arena on Feb. 25. The Red &

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impromptu rubber game of this year's series, with the

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Black will now take on top seed Catholic Memorial (18-2-1)

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SPORTS

With postseason starting Friday night, WHS boys hoop seniors English, Sarpong, Burbine join Middlesex League elite

The Winchester High boys basketball team, the 22nd seed, will take on Middlesex League rival Lexington, the 11th seed, to begin the Division 1 state tournament in the Round of 32 on Friday night, Feb. 27, starting at 6 p.m. These teams are so evenly matched, beginning with the

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SPORTS

After Ryan, Collins earn league honors, Winchester High girls basketball begins postseason Saturday in Worcester

After digging out from the Blizzard of 2026, the Winchester High girls basketball team (13-8, 28th seed) still has a few days to prepare for its Division 1 Round of 32 state tournament game against host South High Community School (17-3, fifth seed). It will be played at the Worcester

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EVENTS

Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

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By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester

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Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On

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High School presents “Chicago: Teen Edition,” a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production is set in the 1920s. Performances will take place on March 13 and 14

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March 4, 2026

Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

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